

Kosovo it is clear to me that we must support strategic airlift. Airlift remains one the largest challenges our forces face. It is my desire to see the Air Force act to resolve this issue with expediency and consider designating the C-5 or the C-17 airframe for the future of the Tennessee Air Guard.

Mr. WARNER. Again, let me assure the Senator from Tennessee that I am confident working with the Armed Services Committee and the Air Force that this issue will be resolved soon.

MEDAL OF HONOR TO ALFRED RASCON 1999

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of the amendment which recommends the Congressional Medal of Honor be awarded to Mr. Alfred P. Rascon. I would like to take just a moment and introduce you to Mr. Rascon.

Alfred Rascon was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, and emigrated to the United States with his parents in the 1950's. He served two tours in Vietnam, one as a medic. When Rascon volunteered for the service, he was not yet a citizen but was a lawful permanent resident, and he was only 17 years of age but convinced his mother to sign his papers so he could enlist.

On March 16, 1966, then Specialist Alfred Rascon, while serving in Vietnam, performed a series of heroic acts that words simply cannot describe. For Rascon and the seven soldiers he aided while under direct gunfire, that day will long be remembered. Rascon's platoon found itself in a desperate situation under heavy fire by a powerful North Vietnamese force. When an American machine gunner went down and a medic was called for, Rascon, 20 at the time, ignored his orders to remain under cover and rushed down the trail amid an onslaught of enemy gunfire and grenades. To better protect the wounded soldier, Rascon placed his body between the enemy machine gun fire and this soldier. Rascon jolted as he was shot in the hip. Although wounded, he managed to drag this soldier off the trail. Rascon soon discovered the man he was dragging was dead.

Specialist 4th Class Larry Gibson crawled forward looking for ammunition. The other machine gunner lay dead, and Gibson had no ammunition with which to defend the platoon. Rascon grabbed the dead soldier's ammunition and gave it to Gibson. Then, amid relentless enemy fire and grenades, Rascon hobbled back up the trail and snared the dead soldier's machine gun and, most important, 400 rounds of additional ammunition. Eyewitnesses state that this act alone saved the entire platoon from annihilation.

The pace quickened and grenades continued to fall. One ripped open Rascon's face, but this did not stop him. He saw another grenade drop five feet from a wounded Neil Haffy. He

tackled Haffy and absorbed the grenade blast himself, saving Haffy's life.

Though severely wounded, Rascon crawled back among the other wounded and provided aid. A few minutes later, Rascon witnessed Sergeant Ray Compton being hit by gunfire. As Rascon moved toward him, another grenade dropped. Instead of seeking cover, Rascon dove on top of the wounded sergeant and again absorbed the blow. This time the explosion smashed through Rascon's helmet and ripped into his scalp. Compton's life was spared.

When the firefight ended, Rascon refused aid for himself until the other wounded were evacuated. So bloodied by the conflict was Rascon that when soldiers placed him on the evacuation helicopter, a chaplain saw his condition and gave him last rites. But Alfred Rascon survived. He was so severely wounded that it was necessary to medically discharge him from the Army.

The soldiers who witnessed Rascon's deeds that day recommended him in writing for the Medal of Honor. Years later, these soldiers were shocked to discover that he had not received it. It appears their recommendations did not go up the chain of command beyond the platoon leader who did not personally witness the events. Rascon was instead awarded the Silver Star. Rascon's Silver Star citation details only a portion of his heroic actions on March 16, 1966.

Perhaps the best description of Alfred Rascon's actions came 30 years later from fellow platoon member Larry Gibson:

I was a 19-year-old gunner with a recon section. We were under intense and accurate enemy fire that had pinned down the point squad, making it almost impossible to move without being killed. Unhesitatingly, Doc [as Rascon was called] went forward to aid the wounded and dying. I was one of the wounded. Doc took the brunt of several enemy grenades, shielding the wounded with his body.

In these few words, I cannot fully describe the events of that day. The acts of unselfish heroism Doc performed while saving the many wounded, though severely wounded himself, speak for themselves. This country needs genuine heroes. Doc Rascon is one of those.

Rascon was once asked why he acted with such courage on the battle field even though he was an immigrant and not yet a citizen. Rascon replied, "I was always an American in my heart."

Mr. President, these actions speak for themselves. I first met Mr. Rascon in 1995. He came to see me as the Inspector General of the Selective Service System, where he continues to serve his nation today. In the course of our conversation I learned of his amazing story, and as the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee at that time, I realized I had to act.

I contacted a number of officials at the Department of Defense and learned that his case could not even be exam-

ined because the law said time to consider those awards had expired. So, in the 1996 Defense Authorization Bill, we changed the law. Four years have passed since then; however, the Secretary of the Army and the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff now agree and have recommended that Alfred Rascon be awarded the Medal of Honor, the Nation's highest award for valor. You have heard this story. The legislation authorizes the President to award the Medal of Honor to Alfred Rascon. If ever there was a case to recognize heroism and bravery far above and beyond the call of duty, this is it.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS—H.R. 1664

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon the Committee on Appropriations met and reported, en bloc, the Fiscal Year 2000 Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, the Fiscal Year 2000 302(b) allocations for the committee, and H.R. 1664, by a recorded vote of 24-3. At that full committee markup, the committee also adopted an explanatory statement of the committee's recommendations in relation to H.R. 1664. That explanatory statement, which was adopted in lieu of a committee report, was filed with the Senate by Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Mr. BYRD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. BAYH, Mr. DEWINE, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. HATCH). Subsequent to that markup, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be added as cosponsors: Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. KOHL, Mr. HELMS, and Mr. BREAU.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. I further ask unanimous consent that the explanatory statement of the committee be printed at the appropriate place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS ON H.R. 1664, A BILL MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

Mr. Stevens (for himself and Mr. Byrd, Mr. Domenici, Mr. Bingaman, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Specter, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Hollings, Mr. Shelby, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Bayh, Mr. DeWine,

Mrs. Hutchison, Ms. Landrieu, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Daschle, Mr. Dorgan, and Mr. Hatch)

The Committee on Appropriations, to which was referred "H.R. 1664, making emergency supplemental appropriations for military operations, refugee relief, and humanitarian assistance relating to the conflict in Kosovo, and for military operations in Southwest Asia for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes" reported the same to the Senate with various amendments and an amendment to the title and presents herewith information relative to the changes recommended.

In order to expedite completion of congressional action relative to the emergency appropriations contained in H.R. 1664, as passed by the House of Representatives, as well as the emergency appropriations contained in H.R. 1141, the Fiscal Year 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation Act, funding for both measures was included in H.R. 1141. The conference agreement on that measure was passed by the House of Representatives on May 18, 1999, by the Senate on May 20, 1999, and the bill was signed by the President on May 21, 1999.

In accordance with an agreement with the bipartisan House and Senate leadership, two provisions which were contained in the Senate version of H.R. 1141 were deleted, without prejudice, from the conference agreement thereon. Pursuant to that agreement, these two provisions, the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program and the Emergency Oil and Gas Guaranteed Loan Program, are to be considered expeditiously by the Senate in a freestanding emergency appropriation bill.

Since the conference agreement on H.R. 1141 included the necessary funding for Kosovo operations, the committee recommends that the text of H.R. 1664 as passed by the House be amended to remove House language, and that language relating to the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program and the Emergency Oil and Gas Guaranteed Loan Program, with offsets, be added. In light of the emergency nature of the funding contained in the bill for these two critical programs, the committee hopes that no amendments will be offered to the measure and that it can be sent directly to the House. The Speaker of the House has agreed to permit a motion to go to conference within one week of receiving this bill after Senate passage, to allow normal appropriation conferees to be appointed, and to permit the resulting conference report to be brought up before the House. The committee urges that this matter be expedited by the Senate in order to hopefully complete action prior to the Memorial Day Recess on this critical emergency facing the steel and oil and gas industries and the tens of thousands of steel and oil and gas workers who have recently lost their jobs as the result of the massive influx of cheap and illegally-dumped imported steel and oil and gas over the past year.

EMERGENCY STEEL LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM

The Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program, as reported by the committee, provides a two-year, GATT-legal, one billion dollar guaranteed loan program to back loans provided by private financial institutions to qualified U.S. steel producers. The minimum loan to be guaranteed for a single company at any one time would be \$25,000,000 (subject to a waiver), and the maximum would be \$250,000,000. A board is established to administer this program consisting of the Secretaries of Commerce (who would serve as chairman), Treasury, and Labor. This board would have the authority to determine

the specific requirements in awarding these loan guarantees, including the percentage of the guarantee, appropriate collateral, as well as loan amounts and interest rates thereon. Repayment of the loans guaranteed under this program would be required within six years.

The committee makes these recommendations in response to the critical situation facing the U.S. steel industry. As a result of global financial chaos, in 1998, a record level of more than 41 million tons of both cheap and illegally-dumped imported steel flooded the U.S. market. This represents an increase of 83 percent over the 23-million ton average for the previous eight years. This wave of imported steel substantially reduced demand for U.S. steel production, and brought about the devastating loss of employment for more than ten thousand American steelworkers.

The U.S. Department of Commerce has found dumping margins of up to 200 percent on Russian steel, up to 67 percent on Japanese steel, and up to 70 percent on steel from Brazil. Appropriate actions are being pursued to assess penalties against those responsible for this illegal dumping of steel. However, even if penalty tariffs are collected against those responsible for this illegal dumping, U.S. steel mills will not receive any compensation for the losses they have suffered. A number of U.S. steel plants have closed or declared bankruptcy since September of 1998, and a number of others are close behind.

Estimates are that jobs of tens of thousands of additional steelworkers are in danger unless this illegal dumping is stopped and those in the U.S. steel industry are able to meet their financial obligations in order to get back on their feet.

EMERGENCY OIL AND GAS GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM

The Emergency Oil and Gas Guarantee program, as reported by the committee, provides a two-year, GATT-legal, five-hundred-million dollar guaranteed loan program to back loans provided by private financial institutions to qualified oil and gas producers and the associated oil and gas service industry, including Alaska Native Corporations. The minimum loan to be guaranteed for a single company at any one time would be \$250,000, and the maximum would be \$10,000,000. A board is established to administer this program consisting of the Secretaries of Commerce (who would serve as chairman), Treasury, and Labor. This board would have the authority to determine the specific requirements in awarding these loan guarantees, including the percentage of the guarantee, appropriate collateral, as well as loan amounts and interest rates thereon. Repayment of the loans guaranteed under this program would be required within ten years.

The committee makes these recommendations in response to the critical situation facing the domestic, independent oil and gas industry. Since the beginning of the most recent oil and gas crisis (January 1997), the industry has lost 42,500 jobs. Bankruptcies have fueled the closure of an estimated 136,000 wells. Twenty percent of total U.S. marginal well production has been jeopardized because of bankruptcies.

The economic slowdown in Asia led to depressed demand, and oversupply. The United Nation's Food for Oil program, which allows Iraq to sell additional oil in an already saturated market, further depressed prices. Every key indicator of domestic oil and gas industry's health—earnings, employment, production, rig counts, rig rates and seismic activity is down.

The committee notes that the United States was 36 percent dependent when the oil embargo of the 1970s hit. U.S. foreign oil consumption is estimated at 56 percent and could reach 68 percent by 2010 if \$10 to \$12 per barrel prices prevail. It has been predicted that half of marginal wells located in 34 states could be shut-in. Marginal wells produce less than 15 barrels of oil and day and are the most vulnerable to closure when prices drop. Yet, these wells, in aggregate, produce as much oil as we import from Saudi Arabia.

There is no current government loan program that will help the oil and gas producers and the oil and gas service industry. The industry tried to use our trade laws but without success. In 1994, when U.S. dependence upon foreign oil was 51 percent, a Department of Commerce section 232(b) Trade Expansion Act investigation report found that rising imports of foreign oil threaten to impair U.S. national security because they increase U.S. vulnerability to oil supply interruptions. President Clinton concurred with that finding. Unfortunately, little action to address the problem has been implemented.

Without an emergency loan program to get them through the current credit crunch there will be more bankruptcies, more lost jobs, and greater dependence on foreign oil.

OFFSET

The committee's recommendation includes a rescission of \$270 million from the administrative and travel accounts of the object class entitled "Contractual Services and Supplies" in the non-defense category of the budget. This category includes such things as \$7 billion for travel and transportation; over \$7 billion for advisory and assistance services; \$44 billion for a category called "other services"; and almost \$30 billion for supplies and materials. The rescission shall be taken on a pro-rata basis from funds available to every Federal agency, department, and office in the Executive Branch, in the non-defense category. The Office of Management and Budget is required to submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate a listing of the amounts by account of the reductions made.

COMPLIANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 7(C), RULE XXVI OF THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Pursuant to paragraph 7(c) of rule XXVI, the Committee ordered reported en bloc, an original fiscal year 2000 Department of Defense Appropriations bill, the fiscal year 2000 section 302(b) allocation, and H.R. 1664, by recorded vote of 24-3, a quorum being present.

Yeas
Chairman Stevens
Mr. Cochran
Mr. Domenici
Mr. Bond
Mr. Gorton
Mr. McConnell
Mr. Burns
Mr. Shelby
Mr. Gregg
Mr. Bennett
Mr. Campbell
Mr. Craig
Mrs. Hutchison
Mr. Kyl
Mr. Byrd
Mr. Inouye
Mr. Hollings
Mr. Leahy
Mr. Lautenberg
Mr. Harkin
Ms. Mikulski
Mr. Reid
Mr. Kohl
Mrs. Murray

Nays
Mr. Dorgan
Mrs. Feinstein
Mr. Durbin

BUDGETARY IMPACT

Section 308(a)(1)(A) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-344), as amended, requires that the report accompanying a bill providing new budget authority contain a statement detailing how that authority compares with the reports submitted under section 302 of the act for the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget for the fiscal year. All funds recommended in this bill are emergency funding requirements, offset herein.

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF OUTLAYS

In compliance with section 308(a)(1)(C) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-344), as amended, the following table contains 5-year projections associated with the budget authority provided in the accompanying bill:

FISCAL YEAR 1999 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RESCISSIONS
(In millions of dollars)

	Budget authority	Outlays
Defense discretionary		
Nondefense discretionary	-270	-108
Mandatory		
Total	-270	-180
Five year projections: Outlays:		
Fiscal year 1999		-108
Fiscal year 2000		-162
Fiscal year 2001		
Fiscal year 2002		
Fiscal year 2003		
Financial Assistance to State and Local Governments		

Note: The above table includes mandatory and discretionary appropriations, and excludes emergency appropriations.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, May 25, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,600,993,485,850.44 (Five trillion, six hundred billion, nine hundred ninety-three million, four hundred eighty-five thousand, eight hundred fifty dollars and forty-four cents).

Five years ago, May 25, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,594,146,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred ninety-four billion, one hundred forty-six million).

Ten years ago, May 25, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,779,572,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred seventy-nine billion, five hundred seventy-two million).

Fifteen years ago, May 25, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,489,052,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred eighty-nine billion, fifty-two million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,111,941,485,850.44 (Four trillion, one hundred eleven billion, nine hundred forty-one million, four hundred eighty-five thousand, eight hundred fifty dollars and forty-four cents) during the past 15 years.

WIC FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been circulating drafts of bills designed to provide WIC benefits to military personnel and to certain civilian per-

sonnel, stationed overseas, for a few weeks. I know that Senator HARKIN and other Senators on both sides of the aisle have also been working on this matter as have members of the other body.

I have received valuable input regarding my drafts from Members, national organizations and even personnel stationed overseas and I appreciate all who have helped. This bill introduction does not mean that I am no longer seeking input. On the contrary, as I have always handled nutrition legislation, I want to work with all Members on this important legislation, which I hope can be unanimously passed.

Basically, the Strengthening Families in the Military Service Act mandates that the Secretary of Defense offer a program similar to the WIC program—the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children—to military and associated civilian personnel stationed on bases overseas. If it makes sense to allow those stationed in the United States to participate in WIC, it makes sense to allow those stationed overseas to have the important nutritional benefits of that program. Why should families lose their benefits when they are moved overseas?

This bill provides that the Secretary of Defense will administer the program under rules similar to the WIC program administered by the Secretary of Agriculture within the United States.

WIC is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. In fact, just a few weeks ago, I joined Senators LUGAR and TORRICELLI, the National Association of WIC Directors' Executive Director Doug Greenaway, as well as others, in celebrating this accomplishment.

For 25 years the WIC program has provided nutritious foods to low-income pregnant, post-partum and breast-feeding women, infants, and children who are judged to be at a nutritional risk.

It has proven itself to be a great investment—for every dollar invested in the WIC program, an estimated \$3 is saved in future medical expenses. WIC has helped to prevent low birth weight babies and associated risks such as developmental disabilities, birth defects, and other complications. Participation in the WIC program has also been linked to reductions in infant mortality.

This program has worked extremely well in Vermont, and throughout the nation.

However, despite the successes of this program, there continues to be an otherwise eligible population who cannot receive these benefits—women and children in military families stationed outside of the United States.

These are families who are serving our country, living miles from their homes on a military base in a foreign

land, and whose nutritional health is at risk. If they were stationed within our borders, their diets would be supplemented by the WIC program, and they would receive vouchers or packages of healthy foods, such as fortified cereals and juices, high protein products, and other foods especially rich in needed minerals and vitamins. If they receive orders stationing them at a U.S. base located in another country, they lose this needed support.

I know that I am not alone in my desire to establish WIC benefits for our women and children of military families stationed overseas. I look forward to working with all members of Congress in making a program that benefits nutritionally at risk women, infants and children serving America from abroad. I know there are other approaches being considered and I want to work out a good solution.

I have been informed of situations where this nutrition assistance is desperately needed by military and civilian personnel overseas. I do not see how we can turn our backs on these Americans stationed abroad. I am willing to work with other ways of providing this assistance but I believe that my bill has advantages over other suggestions. First, this bill guarantees this assistance for the next three years and mandates a study to determine if improvements or other changes are needed.

This bill also disregards the value of in kind housing assistance in calculating eligibility which increases the number of women, infants and children that can participate and makes the program more similar to the program in the United States. The CBO has estimated that the average monthly food cost would be about \$28 for each participant based on a Department of Defense estimate of the cost of an average WIC food package in military commissaries. Administration costs which include health and nutrition assessments are likely to be about \$7 per month per participant, according to CBO.

I am advised that counting the value of in kind housing assistance as though it were cash assistance would reduce the cost of this program to \$2 million per year and that 5,100 women and children would participate in an average month under such an approach. This will be an issue which I look forward to discussing with my colleagues.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Strengthening Families in the Military Service Act of 1999".